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PREVENTION, AS A MEANS OF REDUCING THE MATERIAL, SOCIAL AND MORAL BURDENS AND DEVASTATIONS OF INTEMPERANCE.

AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION

AN ADDRESS

READ TO THE

CORPORATION OF THE WASHINGTONIAN HOME,

7583.240

AT ITS

ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 29, 1872.

BY OTIS CLAPP.

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1872.

WASHINGTONIAN HOME,

1009 Washington Street, - - - - - - - - - - Boston.

This institution, the first of its kind ever organized, is now in its fifteenth year of successful practice. Its reformatory merits are best attested by the thousands of its graduates from all parts of the Union, who have been either permanently cured, or more or less benefited by its treatment.

Moderate drinkers or confirmed inebriates may here find all the aids that science, long experience, and a kindly interest in their welfare have devised for their moral and physical improvement and cure.

Neither force nor restraint are resorted to, but every effort is made to make the patients self-reliant, and to afford them the privileges, the comforts, and the social enjoyments of a *home.*

The terms are moderate, and are graduated to meet the pecuniary ability of the applicants. Poverty has never been a bar to close the doors of the institution against a worthy petitioner.

OTIS CLAPP,
President.

WM. C. LAWRENCE,
Superintendent.

American Statistical Association.
June 24, 1904

WASHINGTONIAN HOME.

This institution has now been in existence since November, 1857. It was first organized under the name of "Home for the Fallen," and so continued about fifteen months.

On the 25th of April, 1859, it was organized under an Act of the Legislature, by the name of Washingtonian Home.

The institution, therefore, has been in operation fourteen years and five months. It seems a proper time, therefore, to present a brief statement of its objects; what it has accomplished; what obstacles it has to meet; and what are its necessities for the future.

The institution was the first of its kind. The first report of the executive committee, made May 1st, 1858, says:—

"In the summer of 1857, a small number of gentlemen, taking into consideration the injurious and devastating effects of intemperance in the community upon all classes, from the highest to the lowest, and particularly upon those whose abilities, kindly disposition, attainments and position in life, might, if not for their unfortunate attachment to the cup, become ornaments to society and a benefit to those who might come within their influence, and believing that many such might, by the aid of sympathy, kindliness and proper influence, be brought to view their sad career in its proper light, so that they would reform and be restored to their families, their friends and to society," &c. Rooms were immediately taken, and the work commenced under great disadvantages.

The report continued:—

"A great advance has been made since the initiatory steps were taken to establish this institution in August last, and, notwithstanding the discouraging circumstances under which the organization was effected, the extremely limited means, the jeers of the hostile, the opposition of enemies, the cold encouragements and even dismal forebodings of the benevolent and friendly, the enterprise has been crowned with a success far beyond anything anticipated, even by any of its sanguine advocates."

Amid these difficulties the institution began. The case of the inebriate requiring treatment is not unlike that of the Prodigal

Son. After "wasting his substance" and he "had spent all," "there was a mighty famine," and "he began to be in want."

This is the condition that aids reflection, through which he "*came to himself.*" If the inebriate is encouraged in these states, as was the prodigal son, there is reasonable prospect of similar results; viz., repentance and reformation.

The experience of this institution in the last fourteen and one-half years, with all its disadvantages, demonstrates this fact. It has endeavored to act towards its patients the part of the father of the prodigal son, according to scriptural conditions. We confidently submit to the enlightened and humane, that this has been faithfully and successfully done. It began with five dollars as a nucleus, and was carried forward with a degree of zeal, hope and faith worthy of all commendation. It had to struggle for the means of existence, and with want of confidence, in friends and foes. Its success, in face of these difficulties, inspired confidence, and this confidence has carried the work forward to this day.

The whole number of patients received into the Home between November, 1857, and May 1st, 1859 (Home for the Fallen), was 381; and from this date to April 1st, 1872, 3,430; making a total of 3,811. Of these, more than one-half were free patients. The money contributed to sustain the Home, from its commencement to April 1st, 1872, has amounted to $188,000. Of this sum, the State has contributed, in twelve years, $61,000, or less than one-third of the whole amount. The average of receipts per year has been $13,143 in 14 years, of which the State has contributed $5,083 per year for twelve years. With this aid from the State and from private sources, the Home has been enabled to support and to reform a large number of free patients, who could not otherwise have been treated.

The House of Representatives have this year withheld this appropriation, on the plea of wishing to reduce taxation. This imposes upon us new and more onerous duties. The question for us to meet is, whether we shall abandon the good work, or go on with it with renewed vigor. The evil to be met is one of the most costly and destructive which afflicts society. Shall we abandon an instrumentality which has proved its power to give a check to both? To do this, would seem to be moral cowardice. Our duty, then, seems to be this—to go before the public, and open the case upon its merits. When this has been faithfully done, we may well trust the result to Providence.

Intemperate men willing to reform are nearly all out of money. All are candidates for State support, either in jails, prisons or alms-

houses, as well as a portion of their families. Without State or other aid, we could neither board nor reform them. With this aid, we can reform a large portion of them, and restore them to society as respectable, productive and tax-paying members. Many of them have alienated themselves from friends, and are destitute of means. They have, however, brains, hands, trades and professions, ready to turn to good and profitable account for themselves, their families and the community, as soon as they can be transferred from the ranks of inebriety to those of sobriety. With the State aid, and that of friends, there has graduated from this institution about 1,900 free patients, at an average expense of less than $40 for each patient. These patients represent every trade, profession, denomination and rank in society. They *now* form an industrial, social and moral force in society which has returned to the community, in material and social advantages, many times the cost. The benefits as between the community and the individual are mutual, as a few facts will show. The mechanics, merchants, editors, salesmen, clerks and others, embracing these patients, are, when sober, of more than average capacity. It would be low to estimate their average earnings at $800 per year. If we can suppose that these 1,900 free patients have been restored to industry one year only, their earnings would reach over $1,500,000. If but one-half the number should earn the $800 each, for the whole time, their earnings would reach $4,500,000. But there is—extravagant as it may appear—an addition to this. Each energetic reformed man feels so well satisfied with his change, that he sets to work to induce others to reform also. In this way as many more are reformed, who do not enter the Home as patients. In this way the Home has been a centre of influence, working quietly, but efficiently, in the way of reforming men.

The Cost of Intemperance.

The cost of intemperance, in its material, social and moral relations, is nearly fabulous. The value of spirits consumed in the United States is estimated in the Bureau of Statistics at $600,000,000 annually. The consumption of these spirits, with its attending results in the wear and tear of life, shattered nerves, loss of labor, diminished production, sickness, pauperism, insanity, idiocy and crime, would amount to as much more. The amount of the two would pay off the national debt, every two years.

The Statistics of Industry for Massachusetts, in 1865, amounted to $517,217,761. The loss to the productive industry of the country through intemperance is estimated, by our most experienced

*

manufacturers, at from ten to twenty per cent. If we allow but ten per cent. loss from this cause, the loss to the State is over $51,721,-761 per year, or about $1,000,000 per week. This expense seems so formidable that we are apt to be discouraged over it. The question therefore arises, is there no way to check this evil—is there no mode of prevention?

We answer in the affirmative, and submit that the experience of this institution has demonstrated the fact. The means of prevention *are* discovered, and can be put in force more readily, more economically, and with better prospect of success, than in cases of insanity or idiocy. This can be done, whenever society is prepared to meet the evil face to face. When Church and State can take up this subject with as much interest as is given to business, pleasures or fashions, this foe can be checked.

This institution thus met the evil over fourteen years ago, and now counts its converts by thousands.

Other institutions, now in the field, are successfully doing a similar work. While the State is spending millions for the machinery of punishing, it ignores the more Christian means of preventing.

The inebriate is just as open to kindly influence as other diseased persons, provided always he is judiciously approached. When his nervous system is prostrated, and his jealous feelings overactive, he is not usually in a mood to profit by sharp lectures. The deeper sentiments can be reached by other influences. It is a mistake to suppose these sentiments are lost, or past revival; they may be buried for a time. Our duty is to aid them to come forth. The inebriate has parted with his power over himself. It is a great event for him to regain it. To do this, he needs judicious help. Our civilization would be untrue to itself, if it failed to afford this help, in his time of need. The inebriate stands in a peculiar relation to society. He becomes, almost unconsciously, the victim of its perverted customs, through which his rational and productive powers are in a state of suspended animation. It may be called both a disease and a crime. Punishment or harsh measures have failed to restore to man that which he had thus lost. The Liverpool magistrates, according to the Boston "Daily Advertiser," have recently tried the experiment of "increased severity" in fines and publicity. "It ought to be admitted by this time," they add, "that the fine-and-cost method of dealing with drunken men is a complete failure, and some other means of dealing with unfortunate men should be adopted at once."

A wise application of kindly influences and remedies, *has* restored them in thousands of cases, and may in many thousands more.

When man thus regains what he had lost,—dominion over himself,—he becomes at once a productive and useful citizen. All of his impaired faculties come into harmonious action. Hence there is no form of investment made by Church or State more sure of profitable returns, in material, social or moral wealth; all of which goes to constitute the wealth of the State.

Private Philanthropy.

Among the reasons given for withholding the State aid for charitable institutions are these—that they are thus forced to rely for support upon private philanthropy; which support, it is suggested, is thereby stimulated and increased.

Such legislators overlook the fact, that those who do the most to create and fix these burdens on society, thus escape their share of supporting them; while the humane classes, who do the least towards creating such burdens, are the ones whom they rely upon to bear them. The State tax equalizes this expense, and is the only one that does. The tax to reform inebriates is purely one of prevention. And the tax to support pauperism, lunacy, idiocy and crime, is reduced according to the measure of its success.

The State is forced to recognize the fact that thousands are on the broad road to pauperism, insanity and crime, by the fact that millions of taxation are required to provide for them when they have reached this condition. It would seem, therefore, the part of wisdom and economy to sustain the effort to stop some of them on the way, and turn them from the broad road into the strait and narrow way represented by the prodigal son. For Massachusetts to withhold such succor in their time of need, is to turn her back upon her long-standing professions.

The Board of Charities, in presenting a contrast between the American and European system of charities, says: "The purpose of charity in New England has been to *diminish the number of the helpless, to make them sounder, stronger, more hopeful and self-reliant.*"

Again, they announce their policy under five heads. The second is this: "To bring about a better classification of the dependent and criminal classes, to *diminish their number*, and to secure *better means for their restoration* to the ranks of industrious life."

The Committee on Public Charitable Institutions indicate, by their actions, an entire unconsciousness of such policy or principles; but seem to think that, if the State makes provision for its people after they have *reached the condition* of pauperism, insanity or crime, its duty is complete.

The chairman of the Finance Committee stated that the Home was a "local institution." This statement is not well founded. It would be just as correct to say this of the Blind Asylum, the Idiotic School, or Worcester Lunatic Asylum. The patients are no more confined to "localities" in one case than in the others. About one-half of the Home patients have resided in Boston, and the rest in other places. About forty per cent. of the tax raised for their support would fall to Boston as its proportion. Of the $188,000 received by the Home for its support, more than two-thirds came from private sources, and less than one-third from the State. Of the $120,000 which came from private sources, much the largest proportion came from Boston; which shows that Boston has received less than its proportion of benefits, if these are measured by contributions for its support.

As population, valuation and taxes, as well as intemperance, are largely in and around Boston, it is natural that the number of patients should preponderate in this vicinity. The four adjoining counties of Suffolk, Middlesex, Essex and Norfolk contain some sixty per cent. of the population, and pay nearly three-fourths of the taxes. In a radius of fifty miles from the State House, embracing nearly all of the seven large counties, the population pay about eighty-seven per cent. of the State taxes.

The chairman of the Judiciary Committee solemnly protested against the injustice of taxing his county (Barnstable) to support an inebriate asylum in Boston. If he had taken pains to measure the burden which the bill would impose, he could realize its magnitude. The proportion of tax his county would have to pay was $75.24. The proportion of his town (Yarmouth), $6.84. The transfer of one mechanic, of average capacity, from the inebriate ranks to those of the productive class, would return to the community the tax on his county in four weeks, and the tax on his town in two days!

Cures of Insanity and Inebriety.

It is a striking fact, that, of the cases of insanity cured, eighty-seven per cent. had been insane less than one year, and seventy-five per cent. less than three months. This is regarded as a fair average of cures. The average of "recoveries" in Massachusetts, out of 14,938 cases, was thirty-nine per cent., and of "improved," twenty-three per cent. Out of over 120,000 cases in all England, the average of "recoveries" was thirty-three per cent. In the Tewksbury Asylum, where the cases are mostly of long standing, out of three hundred and seventeen patients, the "recoveries," in two

years, are given as nine, and "improved" as twelve. This makes the "recoveries" three per cent., and "improved" four per cent.

With inebriates, experience proves that persons of middle age, say from thirty-five to forty-five, are more likely to reform than those younger.

Of cures in well-managed inebriate asylums, some claim more than fifty per cent. It is safe to say that over one-third are completely cured, and that more than one-half of the remainder are greatly improved. The cure is also effected in a much shorter time.

Burdens.

The burdens imposed upon society through the agency of intemperance, directly and indirectly, are so costly, that it may be well to glance at some of them.

The State has expended nearly one-half a million dollars in almshouses, and nearly two and one-half millions in current expenses; also three-fourths of a million for insane asylums, and one and one-half millions in current expenses.

Cost of Construction.		*Cost in Current Expenses.*	
State Prison, ...	$800,000;	Current expenses, over receipts,	$228,511
221 town and city almshouses,	2,000,000;	Annual pauper expenses, . .	1,125,000
County prisons, ...	2,536,341;	Yearly expenses, . . .	302,411
Rainsford Island Hospital, .	103,228;	Current expenses, . . .	342,726
Blind Asylum, ...	130,000;	Current expenses, . . .	446,722
Idiot School, ...	50,822;	Current expenses, . . .	205,160
School Ships, in construction and current expenses, over, ...			500,000

Cost of all classes of poor, in thirteen years, over eleven and one-third million dollars.

The city of Boston pays yearly, for expenses of the house of correction, house of industry, lunatic asylum, court, police, overseers of the poor, over $1,200,000.

The increase of our police expenses are from $39,780.52, in 1850–51, to some $600,000 in 1871–72; an increase of one thousand four hundred per cent., while the increase of population is one hundred per cent. But still the principle of prevention has to meet so many legal and technical objections, that it is made a "pursuit of philanthropy under difficulties."

That all of these vast burdens can be greatly reduced, is plain to all who look beyond the surface, by an enlightened system of prevention. The Home at first led, and afterwards followed, in the path suggested by the Board of Charities. Its work, it is believed, has been as successfully and as wisely done, as if the State had fur-

nished all the means, and had exercised full control. An inebriate asylum was commenced in the State of New York about the same time as the Home. The legislature of that State made an appropriation to aid in the construction of buildings in 1859. The Massachusetts legislature, in the same year, made its first appropriation in these words: "$3,000 to the Washingtonian Home, to be expended by the directors for the charitable purposes of the institution, in providing a refuge for inebriates, and means of reforming them." The State of New York had contributed to the construction of buildings, between 1859 and 1868, $430,439. In 1869, $500,000 had been expended; of which $35,000 had been paid by private stockholders, and the rest by the State. The land and building will cost, when complete, over $800,000. Simple interest on this sum would support four establishments like the Home. But still the number of patients treated is less per year than in the Home. The whole number treated is less by two-thirds than in the Home.

Of two hundred and forty-four patients, in 1871, thirty per cent. paid $20 per week; twenty-five per cent. paid $15 per week; twenty-five per cent. paid $5 to $10 per week; twenty per cent. were free.

In the Home, more than half have been free patients. If our State had established an inebriate asylum, the probable cost of the building alone would be double its entire appropriation in twelve years, viz., $122,000; which, with current expenses, would exceed $250,000.

The plans for the new Home building have been made and adopted with great care, combining economy, neatness and utility.

Contracts for the masons' and carpenters' work have been made, and the work commenced. The lot is already paid for, and is one of the best in the city.

We have other funds, which, with those paid for the land, are sufficient to pay three-fourths of the cost of the complete establishment. For the remainder of the sum required, some $20,000, we must look to the generosity of the humane and charitable, as in times past. About one-third of this is already provided, and we feel confident that the rest will be forthcoming when needed.

The first recommendation in the first report of the Board of Charities was this:—

1. "That the State ought not to establish any more institutions to be exclusively supported from the public treasury, but rather, when new necessities arise, *provide for them by assisting private charity*, or the municipal organizations."

In their second report, they give "General Principles of Public Charity":—

1. "That if, by investing $100, we prevent an evil, the correction of which would cost ten cents a year, we *save* four per cent."

5. "We should *avail ourselves of responsible societies and organizations which aim to reform, support or help* any class of dependants, thus blessing the direct agency of the State, and enlarging that of the people themselves."

The Secretary of the Board of Charities concludes his last report in these words:—

"The experience of the year encourages activity in all movements for the extirpation of these evils. Not, indeed, in our day, if ever on earth, will they disappear. But the vision which comprehends history sees them yielding day by day to human effort, blessed of heaven.

"Every deed done, every word spoken, every aspiration breathed for the welfare of mankind, is an imperishable gift to the present and bequest to the future. In that faith it becomes us to live and work, anxious that nothing shall be left undone which may help the poor, the disabled and the criminal, and never losing heart if not permitted in our own day to realize the fruition of our toil."

These and similar sentiments have been urged from year to year, and we have labored successfully to give them effect.

The principles upon which the Home was founded have been applied in the Detroit house of correction, by Mr. Brockway, its superintendent, in reforming prisoners, and with marked success in both a financial and moral point of view. Sixty-five per cent. of the prisoners acknowledge themselves as victims of intemperance.

The public are beginning to realize what can be done in this direction. It is certainly no time for us to relax our efforts in this work. We may respectfully ask both legislators and voters to revise some of their opinions on these subjects, with the aid of increased knowledge, and broader and more humane views.

The Home has established for itself a good record for integrity, economy and faithfulness to its trust. It has neither turned to the right hand nor to the left, in pursuit of impracticable theories or experiments, but has steadily kept in view, as a guide, the teaching of the prophet: "Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat of the good of the land."

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